FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
5-170	ORLEANS		EAS.85

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: *(neighborhood or village)*:
North Eastham

Address: 945 Massasoit Road

Historic Name: Fred P. & Alice M. Turner House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: 1911-18

Source: deeds, censuses, vital records

Style/Form: Colonial Revival/Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: Jesse E. Brewer, probable builder

Exterior Material:
Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Sheds

Major Alterations *(with dates)*:
Additions to front of wing, ca. 1920
Additions on rear and north end, mid- to late 20th c.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.40

Setting: The property is situated on a historic highway leading north from North Eastham and is now part of a pattern of late-20th-century residential subdivisions.

Photograph

View from SE.

Locus Map (north at top)

Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2020

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Fred P. & Alice M. Turner House, built ca. 1918, is a story-and-a-half wood frame single dwelling designed in the traditional form of the Cape Cod house. It was built by Eastham carpenter Jesse Brewer. The house has a center chimney of the scale used for stoves and likely a modified center chimney plan. An entrance, contained in a hipped-roof exterior vestibule, is at the center of a three-bay front façade, surmounted by a single gabled dormer. The trim along the wall and roof edges is thin and restrained; shallow eaves project on all sides. A rambling series of wings extend from the sides and rear of the house. A one-story, gable-roof kitchen wing on the south side of the building appears to be original. It is recessed behind the front wall of the house. It has acquired a front hipped-roof extension, perhaps originating as a porch, with two porthole windows on the front and one on the side. These are whimsical elements reflecting the owner's occupation as a fisherman and association with the creation of the Nauset Fishermen's Association. A triangular dormer on the front and an oriel on the south end further distinguish the wing. Another hipped bump-out on the rear of the wing contains a chimney suggesting the kitchen extended into this area. Three more projections are located on the rear of the house. A small one appears to contain a bathroom, a large one containing a room with a fireplace may be the most recent addition. The third connects the other two. A one-story addition is attached to the north end of the house, probably for a bedroom, looks to have been built in the mid-20th century.

The house occupies a small corner lot at the intersection of Cook's Brook Road, which was created for a residential subdivision west of Massasoit Road. The lot has an open area in the center bordered on all sides by thick foliage. A driveway enters the south end of the parcel from Cook's Brook Road and enters a small parking area. Two sheds are located on the north side of the lot.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

When William B. Steele of 1285 Massasoit Road (EAS.86) sold a quarter-acre lot at the intersection of Massasoit and Cooks Brook Road to Jesse E. Brewer in 1911, the deed does not mention the presence of buildings; that Brewer paid Steele only $20 suggests the lot was indeed vacant at the time of the sale. The parcel was a small part of land that had once belonged to Parker and Rachel Atwood Brown, who had earlier lived at 1285 Massasoit Road; twenty-two acres of it had descended in the family of their eldest daughter Hannah (1812-93), wife of Warren Higgins. In 1905 the widow of children of the Higginses' son Warren R. Higgins (1852-92) sold the acreage to William B. Steele, and six years later Steele sold the quarter-acre house lot to Jesse Brewer (1839-1929). Brewer was a carpenter, and he took out a mortgage on the lot in order, most likely, to develop it; he almost certainly built both 945 and 845 Massasoit Road on speculation. In June 1918 when Brewer sold the quarter-acre lot to Fred P. Turner, it had a house and outbuildings on it.[1]

Born in 1895 in Boston, Fred Prescott Turner was the son of Blanche Eliza Turner (1873-1937), the daughter of Laban W. Turner and Mary Lincoln Turner.[2] His mother married William B. Steele in 1898, and he grew up with his half-brothers William B. Jr. and Charles Malcolm Steele at 1285 Massasoit Road. He was a farm worker from at least the age of fifteen. By 1915, when he married Alice May Nickerson of Harwich, he was working for the Coast Guard; by 1917, when he registered for the draft, he was a shell fisherman. In 1920 he and his wife and their daughter Methel were living in the 945 Massasoit Road house (many houses actually on this road were mistakenly listed on Campground Road in that year's federal census), and the 1929 Eastham directory lists him as a fisherman living there. The 1930 census credits Turner with $1500 in real property, and by then he and his wife had three more children—Mary E., Warren B., and Beatrice M. By 1940 Turner had begun building fishing and "pleasure" boats and was living at 945 Massasoit Road with his wife, daughters Methel, Mary, and Beatrice; son Warren, then eighteen and working as a shell fisherman; two-year-old son Gregory, and a two-year-old granddaughter, Louise. Fred Turner helped organize and was the first vice president of the Nauset Fishermen's Association, organized by sixty Eastham and

[1] Curtis Hopkins to Warren Higgins, 29 October 1838, BCD 49:512; Frances E. Higgins, Cambridge; Wilbur W. Higgins, Cambridge, Mabel Higgins Donham, Newton, to William B. Steele, 15 June 1905, BCD 276:257; William B Steels to Jesse E. Brewer, 22 August 1911, BCD 363:382; Jesse E. Brewer to Fred P. Turner, 20 June 1918, BCD 362:205.
[2] He was apparently named for Blanche's brother, who died at the age of five in 1873.

Orleans fishermen in 1934, served the town as a fish and game warden, and was an office and one-time "Noble Grand" of the Odd Fellows lodge in Orleans.[3]

In 1943 Turner defaulted on the mortgage he had taken out of the property in 1925, and Wellfleet Savings Bank foreclosed on 945 Massasoit Avenue and sold it soon after to Clayton O. Horton of Eastham; Horton sold it two years later to a couple from Grafton who owned the property for seven months and sold it in October 1945 to Francis M. Walsh of Hudson.[4] Walsh in turn sold the property less than three years later to Joseph S. and Miriam Willoughby. Joseph Samuel Willoughby (1888-1967) was born in Baltimore and living in Boston by 1910, when he married Alice M. Galvin of Dorchester, and he was a longtime insurance claims investigator in Boston. He died in North Eastham in July 1967, and two months later his daughter John sold 945 Massasoit Avenue to Kenneth W. Stevens III and Mary T. Stevens. A decade later the Stevenses sold the property to John and Anne Marie Rabke of Montclair, New Jersey, who were the owners in 2020.[5]

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. Deeds, Land Court Records, and Subdivision Maps.
Barnstable Patriot Archives. Sturgis Library Digital Newspaper Archive, https://digital.olivesoftware.com/Olive/APA/Sturgis/#panel=home.
Deyo, Simeon L., ed. *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts, 1620-1890*. New York: H. W. Blake, 1890.
Dunham's 1929 Eastham (Mass.) Street Directory.
Town of Eastham Tax Commitment Books. 1902-57.
Lowe, Alice Albert. *Nauset on Cape Cod: A History of Eastham*. Falmouth, MA: Eastham Historical Society, 1968.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance Survey Report: Eastham." Typescript, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, 1984.
Resident and Business Directory of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, 1901. South Framingham, MA: A. E. Foss Publishing Co., 1901.

MAPS
Rogers, Josiah, Elijah Knowles, and Simeon Kingman. A Map of Eastham. 1795.
Hales, John G. *Plan of Eastham and Orleans*. 1831.
Walling, Henry F. *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket Massachusetts Based upon the Trigonometrical Survey of the State*. New York: D. R. Smith and Co.,1858.
Official Topographical Atlas of Massachusetts Compiled and Corrected by H. F. Walling and O. W. Gray. Boston: Stedman, Brown and Lyon, 1871.
Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts. Boston: George H. Walker and Co., 1880.
Atlas of Massachusetts from Topographical Surveys Made in Co-operation by the United States Geological Survey and the Commissioners of the Commonwealth 1884-1888. Boston: Commissioners of the Commonwealth, 1890.
Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts . . . from Official Plans and Actual Surveys. Boston: Walker Lithograph and Publishing Co., 1905, 1910.

[3] See "Fisherman Organized," *Yarmouth Register*, 17 March 1934, 8: and ibid., 15 November 1935, 5, and 28 February 1936, 8.
[4] Fred P. Turner to Wellfleet Savings Bank, 9 December 1943, BCD 609:99; Wellfleet Savings Bank to Clayton O. Horton, 6 December 1943, BCD 609:102; Clayton O. Horton to Stanley R. and Myrtle A. Damstrom, Grafton, 3 February 1945, BCD 624:52; Stanley R. and Myrtle A. Damstrom, North Grafton, to Francis M. Walsh, Hudson, 25 October 1945, BCD 637:227.
[5] Francis M. Walsh, Hudson, to Joseph S. and Miriam Willoughby, 3 June 1948, BCD 695:418; Joan Willoughby to Kenneth W. Stevens III and Mary T. Stevens, 23 September 1967, BCD 1383:899; Kenneth W. Stevens III and Mary T. Stevens, to John and Anne Marie Rabke, Montclair NJ, 5 October 1979, BCD 2994:172. Francis Walsh apparently bought adjacent property between 1945 and 1948 to increase the lot size to the current 0.4 acre.

PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)

View from SW.

View of north wing from NE.